

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action, and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 30 has been amended to correct an error. In particular, “the step of automatically retrieving messages” has been amended to read “the step of retrieving” in order to provide proper antecedent basis for the limitation.

Claim 30 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,058,290 to Katagiri (hereinafter “Katagiri”). For the following reasons, the rejection is again respectfully traversed. Reconsideration of the claim is respectfully requested.

Regarding claim 30, Applicant again submits that Katagiri does not teach “inputting a character sequence *designated by a user*” and “retrieving from the storage device all of the messages that contain the character sequence *designated* in the step of inputting,” as required. In the Office action, the Examiner disagrees with Applicant’s view, stating that “Katagiri suggests that adding a *predetermined* code word (a predetermined signal) to a head of each data piece representing the designated message” (page 3, emphasis added). However, as Applicant has previously explained, as set forth in claim 30, the character sequence is not *predetermined*, as with the *predetermined* code word or signal of Katagiri. Rather, claim 30 requires that the character sequence is *designated by a user*. In response to this argument, the Examiner states that “The claim does not suggest user choose the character sequence,” (Office action, page 4). Applicant is puzzled by this statement since claim 30, as repeatedly mentioned, requires “a

character sequence *designated by a user.*” Thus, clearly claim 30 requires that the user must choose the character sequence.

It is not clear to the Applicant why the Examiner considers the *predetermined* code word or signal taught by Katagiri to be “designated by a user.” For the Examiner’s clarification, the verb “designate” is a synonym for the verb “choose” (see *Roget’s New Millennium™ Thesaurus, First Edition*). Thus, as used in claim 30, the phrase “designated by a user” has essentially the same meaning as “chosen by a user.”

Further, it is believed by the Applicant that the Examiner may somehow be interpreting the use of the word “designated” in claim 30 to refer to the messages, such that the claim merely requires that messages are designated by a user. For further clarification, as used in claim 30, the word “designated” clearly refers to the “character sequence” *not* to “the messages.” In fact, the word “messages” is not even mentioned in the step of “inputting a character sequence designated by a user.”

As clearly explained above, claim 30 requires that character sequences are designated (chosen) by a user. Since Katagiri teaches a predetermined code word or signal, and not a character sequence chosen by the user, the teachings of Katagiri do not anticipate every limitation of claim 30, as required to maintain a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of claim 30.

Claims 25 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,426,424 to Vanden Heuvel (hereinafter “Vanden Heuvel”) in view of Katagiri.

Claims 27 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Vanden Heuvel in view of Katagiri and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,239,679 to Murai.

In each of these rejections the Examiner relies upon Katagiri for teaching “erasing concerned messages collectively, the concerned messages being those of the stored messages that contain the *designated* character sequences” (claim 25). Claim 25 also requires the step of “*designating* character sequences.” As explained above with regard to claim 30, Katagiri teaches deleting messages that include a *predetermined* read inhibition code word. Since the code word or signal of Katagiri is *predetermined*, its teachings cannot be applied to a character sequence which has been chosen in the step of “designating character sequences.” Further, Katagiri teaches only using a *predetermined* read inhibition code word, and in no way suggests modifying its teachings so that the read inhibition code word is designated in a step of “designating character sequences” as required by the instant claim 25.

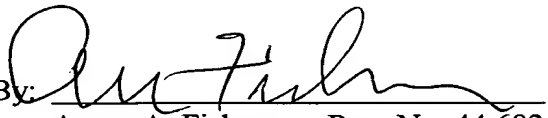
Thus, for the aforementioned reasons, Katagiri does not teach or suggest the limitation of claim 25 for which the Examiner has relied upon it for. Claims 26–28 depend from claim 25. Therefore, even if the teachings of Katagiri were combined with the other references cited in each of the rejections, every limitation of claims would not be taught or suggested by the combination.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

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If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same
to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 31812.

Respectfully submitted,
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